

# Opening Doors to Success

Transition Practices:  
What We Know and  
What We Need to Know



# What we know about the transition of young children

- Most of what we currently know about transition is based on two large scale studies of children who are typically-developing moving from preschool to kindergarten:
  - National Head Start/Public School Transition Study (Ramey et al., 2000)
  - Transition at Kindergarten from NCEDL Research (Pianta, Cox, Taylor, & Early, 1999)

# What we know about *children*



- Various experiences interacting with other adults and familiarity with cooperating and following their directions is important to successful transition.
- A regular routine or schedule of some sort is necessary so children have a sense of routine and predictability to help promote successful transition.

(Pianta et al., 1999; Ramey et al., 2000)

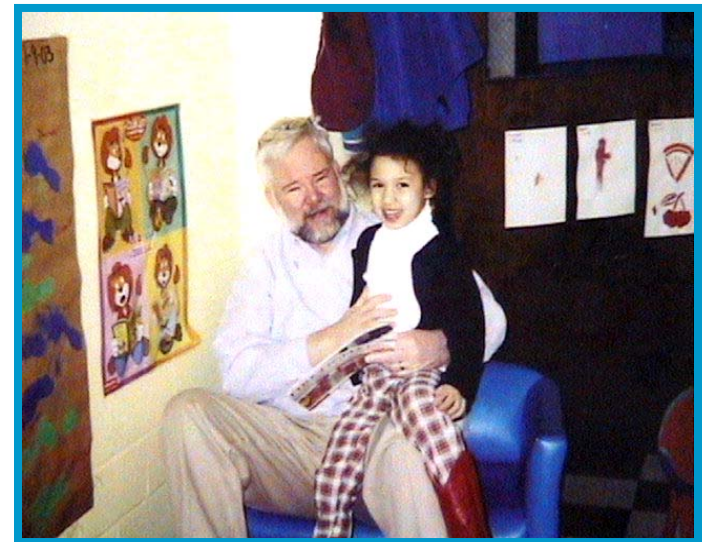
# What we need to know about *children*

- How do we best facilitate successful transitions and support positive child outcomes in the post-transition environment for vulnerable or risk populations?
- How do the transition experiences of young children influence their abilities in communication and literacy, social and peer behavior in the post-transition environment?



# What we know about *families*

- Family involvement in the school and in their child's education makes a difference.
- All families should have a personal, low stress contact with the school (preferably with the child's teacher) before school starts that is designed for the school to LISTEN to the parents.
- Families can be involved by preparing children for classroom work in several ways such as reading to children, participating in story time, playing games, and conversing regularly about day-to-day activities. (Pianta et al., 1999)



# What we need to know about *families*



- What family characteristics influence the transition process and are linked to successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?
- How do family needs and supports influence the transition process and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?
- What kinds of family involvement activities are most closely linked to successful transition and child and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?



# What we know about *programs*

- Teachers must communicate with one another and the family about the child's needs and about the classroom experiences that are and will be offered in their settings. (Pianta et al., 1999; Ramey et.al., 2000)
- Teachers must visit each other's classrooms. Teachers must meet to connect their curriculum and expectations to one another and meet with parents to talk about the transition needs of individual children.



# What we need to know about *programs*



- How do program policies and procedures influence successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?
- Which program models promote successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?
- Which transition strategies are most closely linked to successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?



# What we need to know about *programs*

- How do the professional characteristics of providers influence the transition process and successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?
- How do environmental factors (quality, curricula, leadership) influence successful transitions and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?



# What we know about *communities*

- Communities must develop transition plans, processes, and evaluation of transition plans and identify who is responsible for implementing these plans.
- A variety of transition strategies need to be offered to families and tailored to meet their individual needs rather than implementing a one-size-fits-all program. (Pianta et al., 2003)



# What we know about *communities*

- Collaboration with schools in developing and implementing an intervention requires flexibility and sensitivity to the unique perspectives and constraints of the program involved.
- Schools and programs can, with little additional financial resources, implement a transition planning process that results in each school or program developing their own transition plan. (Pianta et al., 2003)



# What we need to know about *communities*

- Which policies and procedures appear to be most helpful in promoting successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?
- What is the relationship of community characteristics and resources (more or few) to successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?





# What we know about *state* policies and practices



- States can initiate and support the development of transition planning in local programs, schools and communities.
- States **MUST** develop a conceptual model that is shared by all stakeholders.
  - Identify key constituencies
  - Identify leadership
  - Timelines of key events
  - Identify the responsibilities of key constituencies

# NECTC Goal

What is the multidimensional and transactional nature of the processes that influence successful transition and child outcomes in the post-transition environment?

**Through NECTC, we want to bridge the gap between what we know and what we need to know to implement successful transitions and support positive outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families.**





## For More NECTC Information

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